



News Release

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Water Management Monthly News Release

OMAHA – Drought conditions continue across much of the Missouri River basin, forcing reservoir levels to record low levels. Runoff in July above Sioux City, Iowa, was 2.1 million acre-feet.

“July’s runoff was only 66 percent of normal,” said Larry Cieslik, Chief of the Water Management office in Omaha. Despite the dry conditions upstream, localized rains below the system of dams allowed releases from Gavins Point to be reduced to 25,000 cfs. The normal rate for July is 33,700 cfs.

Releases were reduced from 28,000 cfs to 25,000 cfs during the month. They will likely be held at 25,000 cfs for the remainder of the tern and plover nesting season, around mid-August.

“Without additional rainfall, we may have to increase Gavins Point releases above 25,000 cfs later in August to meet downstream flow targets as tributary flows fall,” said Cieslik.

The current runoff forecast for 2004 is 16.2 MAF, compared to a normal of 25.2 MAF.

“Because the reservoirs are low, releases will remain at minimum service levels. The navigation season will be shortened 47 days, in accordance with the revised Master Manual and its more stringent drought conservation measures,” said Cieslik.

Flow support for the commercial navigation season will end as follows:

Sioux City, Iowa	October 6
Omaha, Nebraska	October 8
Nebraska City, Nebraska	October 9
Kansas City, Missouri	October 11
Mouth near St. Louis, Missouri	October 15

System storage ended July at 37.8 MAF. Last year at this time it was 44.4 MAF. The amount of water currently stored in the reservoirs is nearly 23 MAF below average.

Lewis and Clark Lake will remain near elevation 1207 feet msl during August.

Fort Randall releases averaged 25,400 cfs in July. They will range from 24,000 cfs to 25,000 cfs in August as needed to maintain Lewis and Clark Lake near its desired elevation. Lake Francis Case ended July at 1353.9 feet msl. It will remain near that level during the summer before dropping to elevation 1343 feet msl during September.

Lake Oahe dropped two feet during July, ending the month at elevation 1574.3 feet msl. It will fall more than two feet in August, ending the month 33 feet below average. The reservoir is 12 feet lower than last year at this time.

Garrison releases averaged a below-normal 17,900 cfs during July to avoid flooding the tern and plover nests below the dam. They were cut to 17,000 cfs on Aug. 4. Lake Sakakawea remained nearly steady during July, ending the month at elevation 1816.5 feet msl. It will drop more than one foot in August, ending the month 27 feet below average. The reservoir is 10 feet lower than last year at this time.

Fort Peck releases averaged 7,200 cfs in June. They will remain near 7,000 cfs until mid-September when they will be reduced to 4,000 cfs. . The reservoir dropped more than one foot during July, ending the month at elevation 2202.4 feet msl. It will drop less than two feet during August, ending the month 35 feet below average. Last year at this time it was 10 feet higher.

The six main stem power plants generated 715 million kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity in July, 72 percent of normal. The forecast for 2004 energy production is 6.8 billion kWh, compared to a normal of 10 billion kWh.

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Daily and forecasted reservoir and river information is available on the water management section of the Northwestern Division homepage at www.nwd.usace.army.mil.

MISSOURI RIVER MAIN STEM RESERVOIR DATA

	Pool Elevation (ft msl)		Water in Storage - 1,000 acre-feet		
	On July 31	Change in July	On July 31	% of 1967-2003 Average	Change in July
Fort Peck	2202.4	-1.4	9,357	59	-208
Garrison	1816.5	-0.0	12,401	62	-25
Oahe	1574.3	-2.1	10,540	55	-505
Big Bend	1420.5	+0.8	1,710	99	+42
Fort Randall	1353.9	-1.1	3,428	90	-107
Gavins Point	1207.2	+1.4	390	95	+38
			37,826	62	-765

WATER RELEASES AND ENERGY GENERATION FOR JULY

	Average Release in 1,000 cfs	Releases in 1,000 af	Generation in 1,000 MWh
Fort Peck	7.2	441	65
Garrison	17.9	1103	145
Oahe	24.8	1525	189
Big Bend	22.2	1364	81
Fort Randall	25.4	1561	164
Gavins Point	26.1	1608	70
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